

haven't, in so many cases, provided the place and the environment for these parents to take their children.

One big shortcoming is Congress's refusal to do its job to reauthorize the community health centers, the so-called federally qualified health centers. My State is home to several dozen federally qualified community health centers. They provide all kinds of healthcare services, in many cases, including pediatric, dentistry, all kinds of preventive care, all kinds of emergency care, and other help for so many families, particularly for low-income families, in their neighborhoods, where this can make a difference.

I want to briefly share three letters to illustrate the importance of this.

Stephanie Wiersma, the CEO of Lorain County Health & Dentistry, wrote to me 2 weeks ago before we passed the most recent continuing resolution:

We desperately plod on, doing all the right things for our health centers and patients, yet for months we have been in limbo and, frankly, sick with fear.

I worry about the impact on my staff and patients. I know the impact on recruitment of providers . . . what professional wants to chance a funding crisis to come work for a health center at this point in time?

Open provider positions means less access to care, plain and simple. Access is especially important now with all the flu and illness going around.

What Stephanie is saying is that when Congress doesn't do its job—when all of us who have health insurance that is paid for by taxpayers fail to do our jobs—these community health centers, which are professionally run and close to home for so many families, cannot plan for the future. They cannot recruit a physical therapist or a pediatric dentist or an internist or a family practice doctor. Is a professional provider, who has invested a lot of money in her education, going to want to go to a health center where Congress simply doesn't do its job in providing funding? I think Stephanie wrote that so very well.

Jared Pollick, CEO of Third Street Family Health Services in my hometown of Mansfield, wrote:

It is nearly impossible to make sound strategic decisions for our organizations without the security of our funding. We are always told both sides of the aisle love Community Health Centers. We really need them to show it with funding.

That is exactly right. I have heard my Republican colleagues talk almost ad nauseam about how much they like the Children's Health Insurance Program, how much they like the community health centers, and I think they really in their guts do. But then Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership let them expire on September 30, did nothing in October, nothing in November, nothing in December. They did a tax cut for the rich. We know that, but they didn't reauthorize, didn't provide additional significant, predictable, sufficient funding for the community health centers or the Children's Health Insurance Pro-

gram. A week ago, finally, we did the Children's Health Insurance Program, but we left hanging the community health centers.

The last letter is from Julie DiRossi-King, chief operating officer for the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers, which represents 512 health centers in Ohio. She said:

We have hit that critical point . . . that the Community Health Center Program as we know and rely on it today will soon be on life support. There literally is no room for additional delay.

I appreciate that Congress finally did the right thing on the Children's Health Insurance Program. I ask Congress to do what is right for the community health centers. It will literally save lives and will matter for so many families in my State and States all over the country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back on both sides and the Senate proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the James nomination?

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 24 Ex.]

YEAS—89

|           |          |              |
|-----------|----------|--------------|
| Alexander | Boozman  | Cassidy      |
| Baldwin   | Brown    | Cochran      |
| Barrasso  | Cantwell | Collins      |
| Bennet    | Capito   | Coons        |
| Blunt     | Cardin   | Cornyn       |
| Booker    | Carper   | Cortez Masto |

|            |           |            |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Cotton     | Isakson   | Roberts    |
| Crapo      | Johnson   | Rounds     |
| Cruz       | Jones     | Rubio      |
| Daines     | Kaine     | Sasse      |
| Donnelly   | Kennedy   | Schatz     |
| Duckworth  | King      | Schumer    |
| Enzi       | Klobuchar | Scott      |
| Ernst      | Lankford  | Shaheen    |
| Feinstein  | Leahy     | Shelby     |
| Fischer    | Lee       | Smith      |
| Flake      | Manchin   | Stabenow   |
| Gardner    | Markey    | Sullivan   |
| Gillibrand | McConnell | Tester     |
| Graham     | Menendez  | Thune      |
| Grassley   | Merkley   | Tillis     |
| Harris     | Murkowski | Udall      |
| Hassan     | Murphy    | Van Hollen |
| Hatch      | Murray    | Warner     |
| Heinrich   | Nelson    | Warren     |
| Heitkamp   | Paul      | Whitehouse |
| Heller     | Perdue    | Wicker     |
| Hirono     | Peters    | Wyden      |
| Hoeven     | Portman   | Young      |
| Inhofe     | Reed      |            |

NAYS—1

Sanders

NOT VOTING—10

|            |           |        |
|------------|-----------|--------|
| Blumenthal | Durbin    | Risch  |
| Burr       | McCaIn    | Toomey |
| Casey      | McCaskill |        |
| Corker     | Moran     |        |

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Alaska.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## RECOGNIZING THE ALASKA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY NORDIC SKI TEAM

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, every week, I have been coming to the floor, going on 2 years now, to talk about what makes my State, the great State of Alaska, such an amazing place to live—gorgeous, untouched mountains, the glaciers, the wildlife. I have live web cams in my office. For people who want to see the bears, walruses, the salmon spawning, bears scooping up these amazing fish from the choked streams, please come on by. Most of that happens during the spring, summer, and fall. The winter, of course, is the longest season in Alaska. In my opinion, it is one of the best times to experience our State.

For those watching on TV or in the Gallery, we want to welcome you to Alaska. Come on by. You will have the trip of a lifetime. I guarantee it.

It is truly the people who make my State such a truly special place. What we try to do each week is talk about